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KREEMER
Peter Milligan
Brett Ewins
Steve Dillon
FOUR
OF 6

SKREEMER™

Created by Peter Milligan & Brett Ewins

part four
"His Corpse to Wake"

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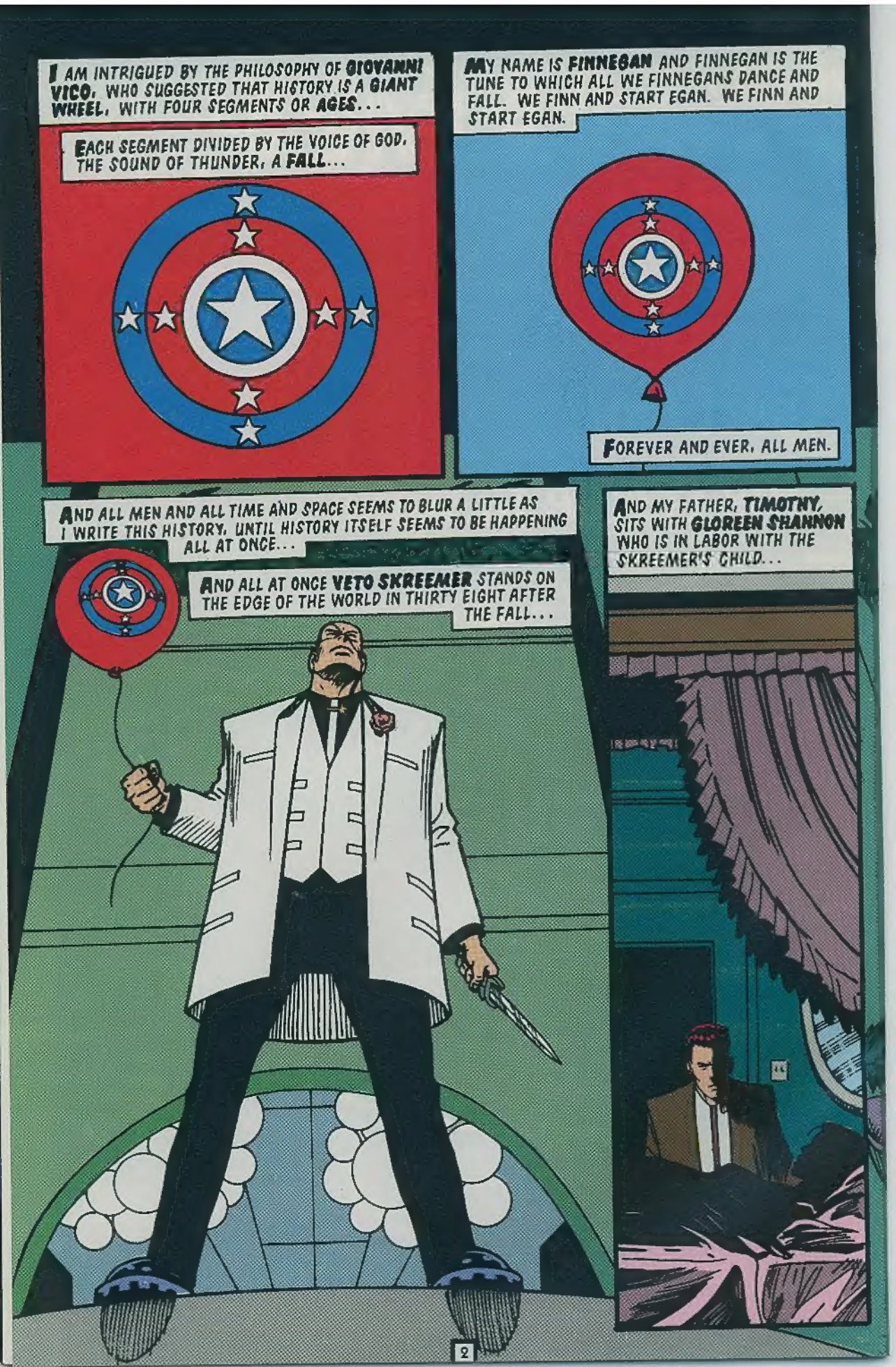
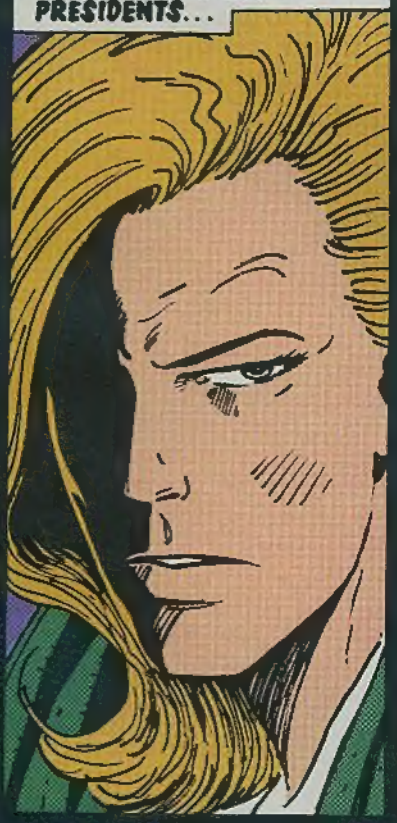

I AM INTRIGUED BY THE PHILOSOPHY OF GIOVANNI VICO, WHO SUGGESTED THAT HISTORY IS A GIANT WHEEL, WITH FOUR SEGMENTS OR AGES...
EACH SEGMENT DIVIDED BY THE VOICE OF GOD, THE SOUND OF THUNDER, A FALL...
MY NAME IS FINNEGAN AND FINNEGAN IS THE TUNE TO WHICH ALL WE FINNEGANS DANCE AND FALL. WE FINN AND START EGAN. WE FINN AND START EGAN.
FOREVER AND EVER, ALL MEN.
AND ALL MEN AND ALL TIME AND SPACE SEEMS TO BLUR A LITTLE AS I WRITE THIS HISTORY, UNTIL HISTORY ITSELF SEEMS TO BE HAPPENING ALL AT ONCE...
AND ALL AT ONCE VETO SKREEMER STANDS ON THE EDGE OF THE WORLD IN THIRTY EIGHT AFTER THE FALL...
AND MY FATHER, TIMOTHY, SITS WITH GLOREEN SHANNON WHO IS IN LABOR WITH THE SKREEMER'S CHILD...

AND IN SIXTEEN AFTER THE FALL SKREEMER MAKES LOVE WITH **VICTORIA CHANDLER**, ON SHEETS THAT ARE SCENTED WITH SAFFRON...

AND **DUTCH AMSTERDAM** WALKS IN AND SEES THEM, SEES VICKY, HIS VICKY, WITH VETO, HIS VETO...

AND IN EIGHT AFTER THE FALL VICKY AND DUTCH SHELTER FROM RAIN, PUSHING HANDS INTO EACH OTHER'S CLOTHES JUST TO KEEP THEM WARM...

AND IN THIRTY EIGHT AFTER THE FALL VICTORIA CHANDLER IS ELECTED **PRESIDENT** OF **PRESIDENTS**...



AND HER GUNMEN WAIT TO MOVE AGAINST SKREEMER'S CRUMBLING EMPIRE...

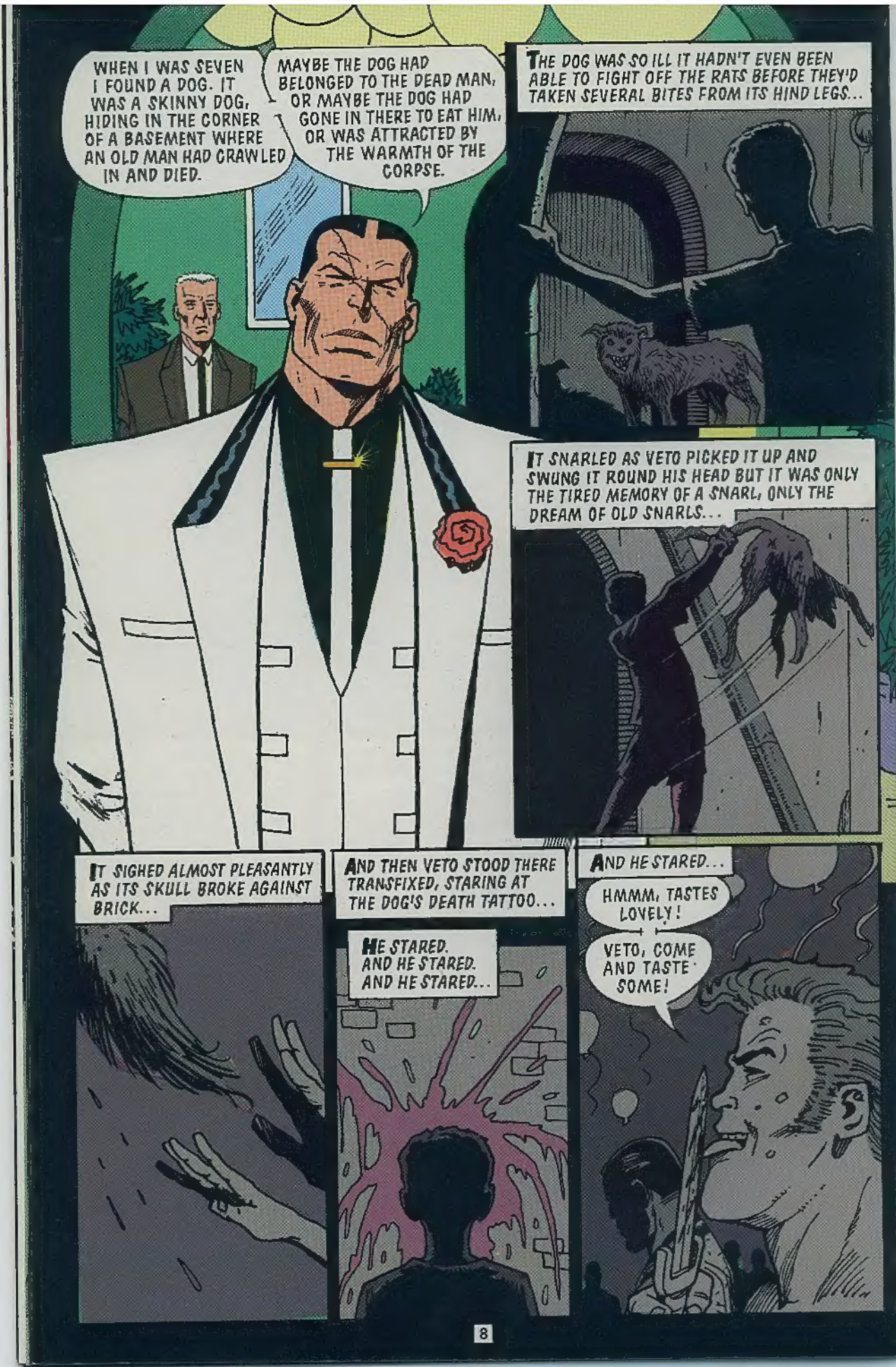
AND DUTCH AMSTERDAM LIES IN A DARKENED ROOM WITH BANDAGES OVER A CRUMBLING FACE.

AND IN TWENTY AFTER THE FALL MY GRANDFATHER, CHARLES FINNEGAN HOLDS MY NEWLY BORN FATHER...
AND FOUR YEARS LATER CHARLES FINNEGAN HOLDS A NAZI DAGGER IN THE PALACE OF PRESIDENT "TIBERIUS" WHYTE...
AND HE FACES TWO CHILDREN HE HAS NEVER SEEN BEFORE...
BUT NOW MUST KILL IF HIS OWN CHILDREN, IF HIS TWINS, HELEN AND GEORGIE, ARE TO LIVE.
HIS HANDS ARE LARGE WITH FAT SPLAYED FINGERS AND THEY TREMBLE AS THEY CLUTCH THE KNIFE, TREMBLE AS THEY TREMBLED ONCE WHEN HE FIRST HELD A CHILD OF HIS OWN.
AH GOD I CAN'T DO IT. ANYTHING ELSE. I'LL KILL MYSELF. WILL THAT DO?
I'LL SLIT MY OWN THROAT... AND YOU CAN LET ALL THE KIDS GO...
YOU SAID IT YOURSELF. HOWEVER BAD THINGS ARE WE ALWAYS HAVE A CHOICE. YOUR CHOICE WAS KILL THEM... OR YOURS DIE.
YOU CHOOSE NOT TO KILL THEM.
SO YOURS DIE.
LIFE'S SO SIMPLE, ISN'T IT?

POPPP
IT WAS TWENTY FOUR AFTER THE FALL. MY GRANDFATHER WALKED HOME THROUGH A FAMILIAR CITY.
EVERYTHING WAS THE SAME. THE BLIND HOUSES, THE MUDDY SKY, GUTTERS HEMORRHAGING FILTH INTO STREETS. EVERYTHING WAS THE SAME.
IT SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN.
HE PASSED A FAT WHORE ON THE STREETCORNER AND HE TRIED TO MUMBLE THE WORDS OF A SONG.
HIS SONG. THE OLD SONG. FINNEGAN'S SONG OF LIFE AND DEATH AND
LIFE AGAIN.

NOT A WORD CAME OUT. HIS SONG WAS DRIED UP. NO MORE FINNEGAN'S WAKE.
NO MORE TALES OF WHISKEY RESURRECTING A CORPSE.
THERE WERE SOME CORPSES EVEN WHISKEY COULDN'T WAKE.
MY GRANDMOTHER KARLA WAS WAITING FOR HIM, WRINGING HER HANDS UNTIL THEY WERE WHITER THAN BONE.
CHARLIE?
OH GOD CHARLIE? PLEASE GOD NO...
THE KIDS, CHARLIE? WHERE ARE THE KIDS? MY BABIES...
KARLA...
HELEN... GEORGIE...

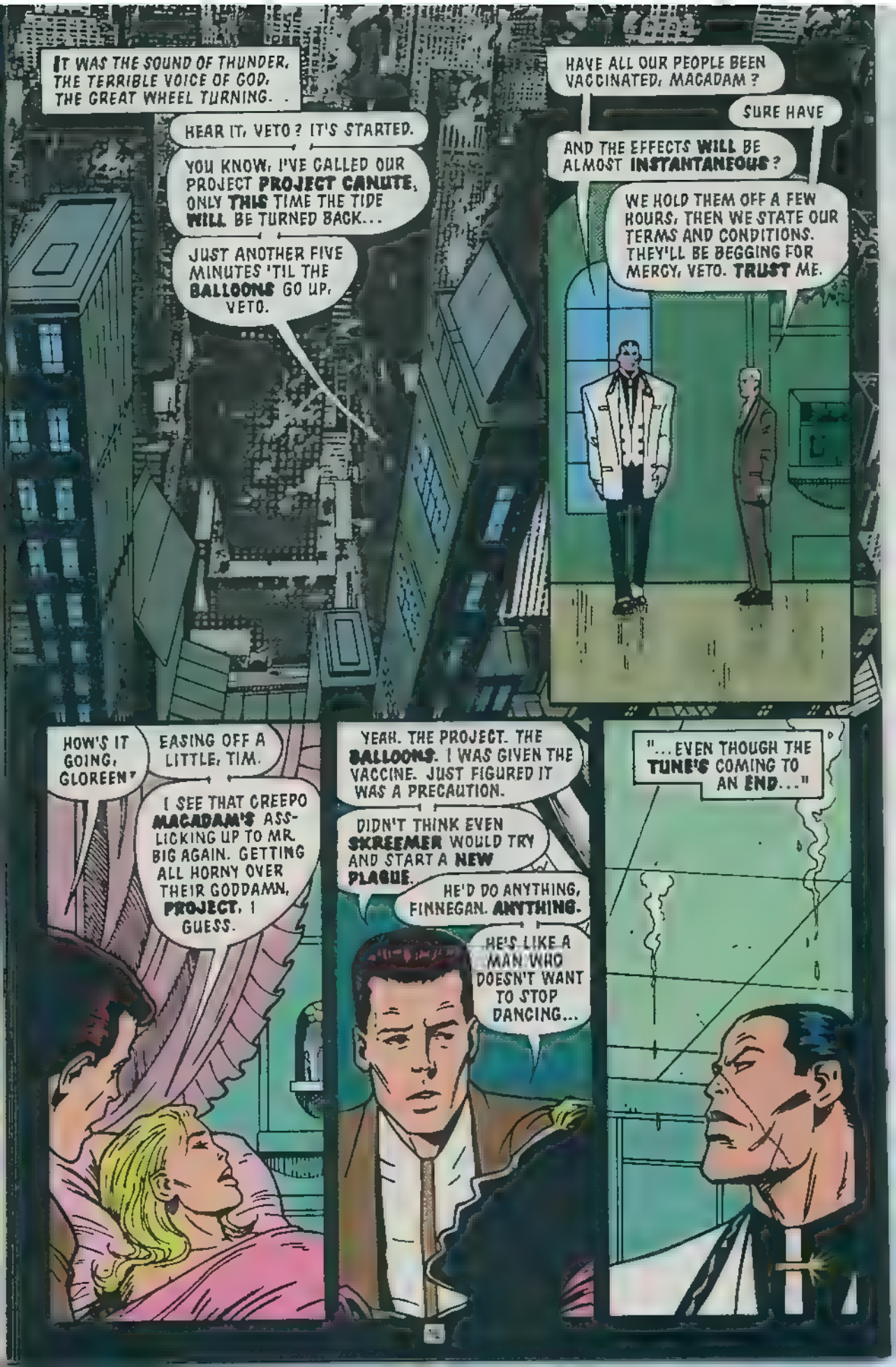
OH THANK GOD... THANK GOD... THANKYOU GOD THANKYOU GOD...
CHARLIE, ARE YOU HURT?
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOUR CLOTHES?
EXCELLENT, VETO! TRULY ENTERTAINING! DID YOU SEE HOW THE LITTLE DEVILS SHUDDERED AT THE MOMENT OF TRUTH?
OH, BUT THEY STRUGGLED SO, DIDN'T THEY? I THOUGHT THEY'D NEVER DIE!
HOW WONDERFUL TO SEE THAT BIG MAN TRYING TO HOLD THEM DOWN, ACTUALLY TRYING TO CLOSE HIS OWN EYES WHILE HE SLAUGHTERED THEM!
HOW WONDERFUL TO SEE THE DEPTHS TO WHICH WE CAN ALL SINK!


WHEN I WAS SEVEN I FOUND A DOG. IT WAS A SKINNY DOG, HIDING IN THE CORNER OF A BASEMENT WHERE AN OLD MAN HAD CRAWLED IN AND DIED.
MAYBE THE DOG HAD BELONGED TO THE DEAD MAN, OR MAYBE THE DOG HAD GONE IN THERE TO EAT HIM, OR WAS ATTRACTED BY THE WARMTH OF THE CORPSE.
THE DOG WAS SO ILL IT HADN'T EVEN BEEN ABLE TO FIGHT OFF THE RATS BEFORE THEY'D TAKEN SEVERAL BITES FROM ITS HIND LEGS...
IT SNARLED AS VETO PICKED IT UP AND SWUNG IT ROUND HIS HEAD BUT IT WAS ONLY THE TIRED MEMORY OF A SNARL, ONLY THE DREAM OF OLD SNARLS...
IT SIGHED ALMOST PLEASANTLY AS ITS SKULL BROKE AGAINST BRICK...
AND THEN VETO STOOD THERE TRANSFIXED, STARING AT THE DOG'S DEATH TATTOO...
HE STARED. AND HE STARED. AND HE STARED...
AND HE STARED...
HMMM, TASTES LOVELY!
VETO, COME AND TASTE SOME!

TWENTY FOUR AFTER THE FALL. A FEW GUARDS STAYED LOYAL TO PRESIDENT WHYTE WHEN SKREEMER MADE HIS MOVE.
MOST JUST STOOD TO ONE SIDE, AS IF THEY KNEW THE INEVITABILITY OF THE DRAMA. . .
. . . AS IF THEY HAD READ THE SCRIPT.
V-VETO, PLEASE, VETO. PLEASE DON'T KILL ME. YOU CAN HAVE ANYTHING. I'LL EVEN LET YOU SLEEP WITH ME.
HE COWERED IN THE BUBBLING WATER OF HIS JACUZZI, AS IF WATER ITSELF MIGHT PROTECT HIM. . .
IT'S YOUR CHOICE, WHYTE.
YOU CAN EITHER DIE LIKE AN ANIMAL.
OR YOU CAN DIE LIKE AN ANIMAL.

AND HE STARED...
...REBECCA...
AND HE STARED.
LET...
ME...
GO...
LET ME GO, KARLA I'VE GOT TO GET THEM CLEAN. THEY'RE DIRTY. DIRTY.
CHARLIE, YOU'VE BEEN WASHING THEM NON-STOP FOR THREE DAYS NOW...
YOU'VE RUBBED THEM RAW.
THEY'RE STILL NOT CLEAN.

THIRTY EIGHT AFTER THE FALL. THE GUNMEN WAITING FOR THE ORDER TO ATTACK GREW RESTLESS. THEIR GUNS WERE HARD AND HOT IN THEIR SWEATY PALMS...
THE SLIGHTEST LAPSE OF CONCENTRATION COULD SET THINGS OFF PREMATURELY.
DAMMIT!
OH MY GOD. THOSE STUPID ASSHOLES HAVE STARTED!
CAN'T PULL 'EM BACK NOW SEEMS WHILE WE WERE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHEN TO ATTACK, FATE TOOK THE DECISION FOR US.
LISTEN, GENTLEMEN. LISTEN... CAN YOU HEAR IT?
IT'S NOT THE SOUND OF WAR. NOT THE SOUND OF BULLETS OR SHELLS OR SCREAMING.
NO.
IT'S THE SOUND OF THE NEW AGE BEING BORN.


IT WAS THE SOUND OF THUNDER, THE TERRIBLE VOICE OF GOD, THE GREAT WHEEL TURNING. .
HEAR IT, VETO? IT'S STARTED.
YOU KNOW, I'VE CALLED OUR PROJECT PROJECT CANUTE, ONLY THIS TIME THE TIDE WILL BE TURNED BACK...
JUST ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES 'TIL THE BALLOONS GO UP, VETO.
HAVE ALL OUR PEOPLE BEEN VACCINATED, MACADAM?
SURE HAVE
AND THE EFFECTS WILL BE ALMOST INSTANTANEOUS?
WE HOLD THEM OFF A FEW HOURS, THEN WE STATE OUR TERMS AND CONDITIONS. THEY'LL BE BEGGING FOR MERCY, VETO. TRUST ME.
HOW'S IT GOING, GLOREEN?
EASING OFF A LITTLE, TIM.
I SEE THAT CREEPO MACADAM'S ASS-LICKING UP TO MR. BIG AGAIN. GETTING ALL HORNY OVER THEIR GODDAMN, PROJECT, I GUESS.
YEAH. THE PROJECT. THE BALLOONS. I WAS GIVEN THE VACCINE. JUST FIGURED IT WAS A PRECAUTION.
DIDN'T THINK EVEN SKREEMER WOULD TRY AND START A NEW PLAGUE.
HE'D DO ANYTHING, FINNEGAN. ANYTHING.
HE'S LIKE A MAN WHO DOESN'T WANT TO STOP DANCING...
"...EVEN THOUGH THE TUNE'S COMING TO AN END..."

YOU CAN'T SIT THERE FOREVER, EATING NOTHING, SAYING NOTHING, DOING NOTHING.
YOU'RE WASTING AWAY, CHARLIE FINNEGAN. D'YOU WANT OUR TIMMY TO GROW UP WITHOUT A FATHER ?
IT'S BEEN ALMOST TWO WEEKS SINCE... SINCE YOU DID WHAT YOU HAD TO DO. YOU'VE GOT TO SNAP OUT OF IT, FOR ALL OUR SAKES.
HELEN AND GEORGIE MAY HAVE LEFT HOME, BUT THEY'RE ALIVE, BECAUSE OF YOU.
YOU MUSTN'T BLAME YOURSELF OR FEEL GUILTY. IF THERE'S A GOD UP THERE HE'D UNDERSTAND. HE'D FORGIVE YOU...
GOD, IS IT ?
IF THERE'S A GOD, WHICH I SERIOUSLY DOUBT, BUT IF THERE IS A GOD HE'S A CALLOUS BASTARD WHO HAS A DAMNED GOOD LAUGH WATCHING US SUFFER.
IF THERE'S A GOD UP THERE HE'S PISSING ON ALL US LOT DOWN HERE..
IN ALL OUR YEARS TOGETHER, KARLA, I NEVER LAID A HAND ON YOU. I NEVER THOUGHT IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR ME TO STRIKE YOU.
I PROMISE IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN...
I'M TAKING MY HANDS AWAY...
CHARLIE, WHERE ARE YOU GOING ? YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE YOUR COAT, CHARLIE...

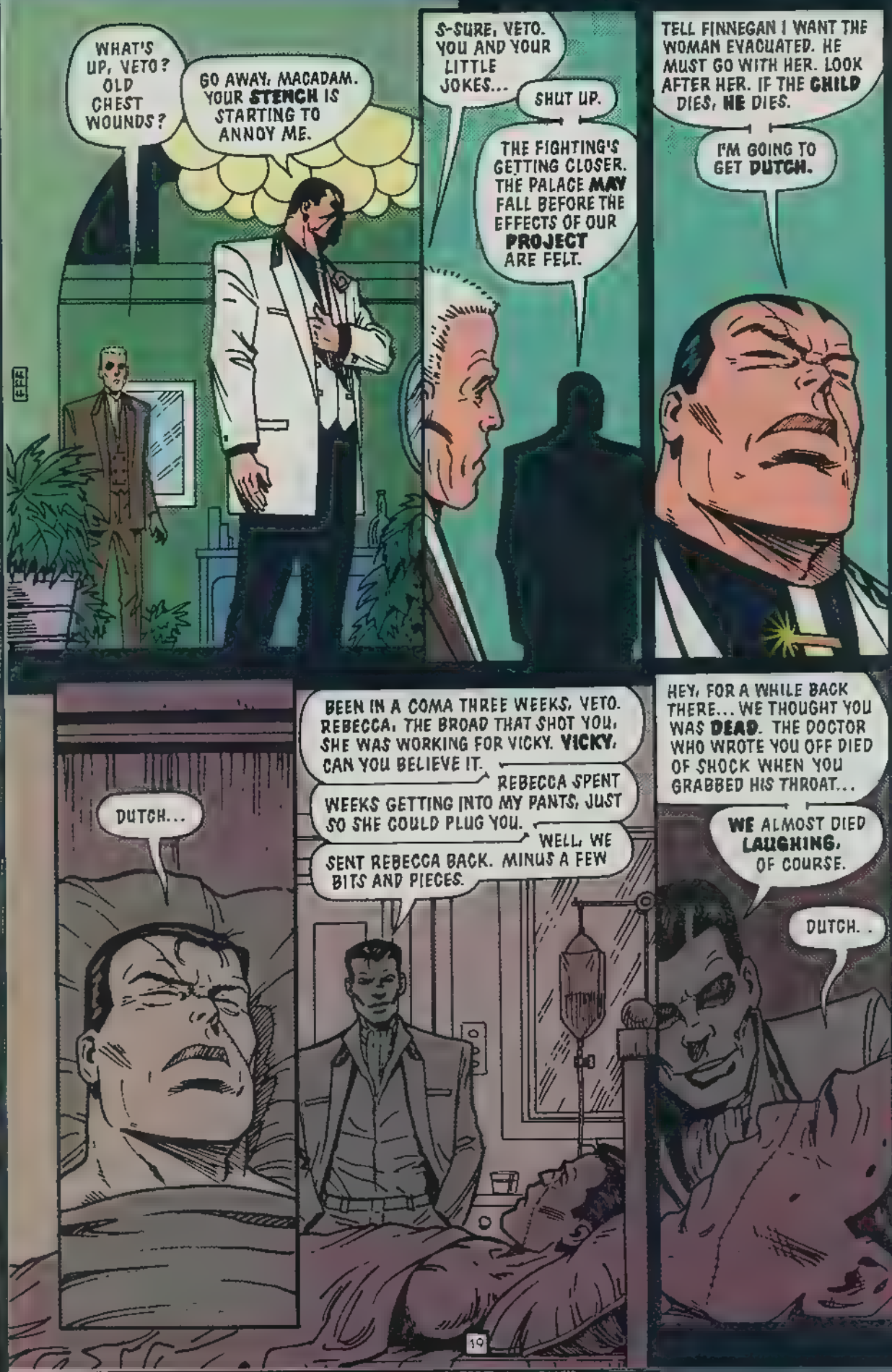
HE WALKED AND HE WALKED AND HE WALKED. MY GRANDFATHER WITHOUT HIS COAT
HE WALKED THROUGH SNOW AND RAIN. HE WALKED THROUGH THE NIGHT. HE WALKED THROUGH THE FOG AND FREEZING MORNINGS
HE WALKED UNTIL HE COULD WALK NO MORE AND THEN HE SLEPT IT DIDN'T MATTER WHERE. HE SLEPT AND THEN HE ROSE
AND THEN HE WALKED AGAIN AND AGAIN
AND AGAIN
AND PEOPLE PASSING BY MAY HAVE SEEN HIS LIPS MOVE, AS IF IN A SPASM, SOUNDLESSLY MOUTHING THE FORGOTTEN WORDS OF A FORGOTTEN SONG
NEVER BEEN BETTER. VETO DRUG LINES. SEX LINES. LIQUOR LINES. FOOD LINES
YOUR EMPIRE'S SWEETER AND MORE PERFECTLY FORMED THAN REBECCA'S TITS
DUTCHY, YOU'RE SO AWFUL!

TWENTY SEVEN AFTER THE FALL
AND I TELL YOU. THEY DON'T COME MUCH SWEETER THAN REBECCA'S
SO WHY AIN'T YOU ENJOYING IT, EH? WHY CAN'T YOU JUST SOMETIMES BE A LITTLE HAPPY?
DO YOU MISS VICKY? IS THAT IT? DO YOU WISH SHE WAS STILL WITH US? I DO.
YOU KNOW, WHEN SHE LEFT YOU I ALMOST FOLLOWED HER
I LOVED HER, VETO. I STILL LOVE HER, I GUESS. I GUESS THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T FOLLOW HER. SHE WOULD HAVE HAD TOO MUCH OF A HOLD OVER ME.
GOD, I DID LOVE HER, THOUGH.
WHAT'S UP?
WHY YOU LOOKING AT ME SO FUNNY, VETO? REBECCA BEEN DRIBBLING OVER ME AGAIN OR WHAT?
VETO?
IT'S NOTHING, DUTCH. NOTHING
LET'S GO

I HEAR BORGES HAS MADE VICKY HIS VICE PRESIDENT, VETO.
AND SPEAKING OF VICE, I BET SHE HAS HER WORK CUT OUT, KEEPING THAT OLD ANIMAL OFF HER.
SHE'S MORE THAN A MATCH FOR BORGES, DUTCH. SHE'S MORE THAN A MATCH FOR ALL--
BLAMMM
BLAMMM
GET THE GUN!
GET THE GODDAMN GUN!
REBECCA

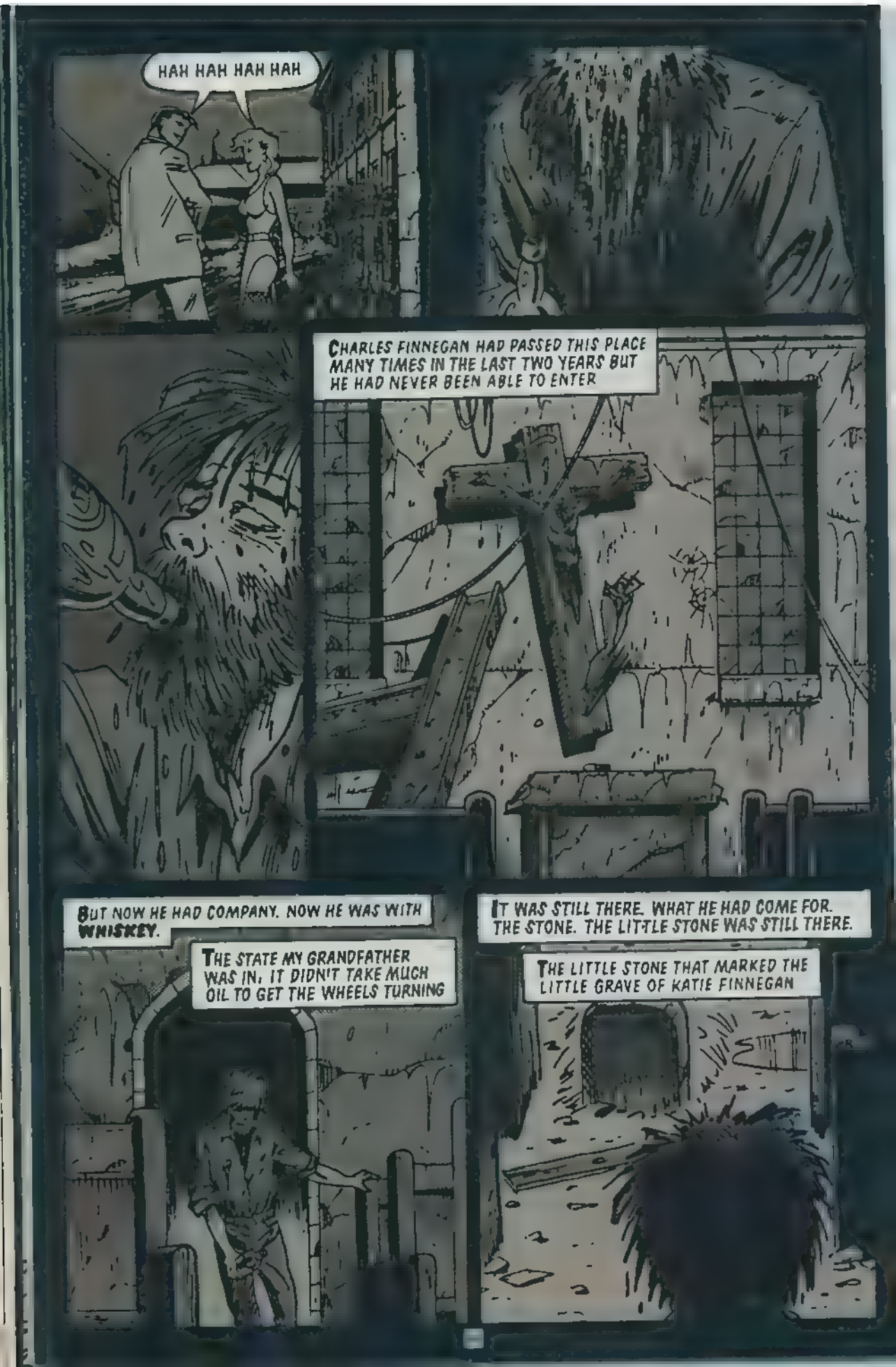
OUT! EVERYONE GET THE HELL OUT!
BAR
MAN, THEY GOT THE SKREEMER!
QUICK, DOC, DO SOMETHING. HE'S LOST A LOT OF BLOOD
TOO MUCH BLOOD, I'M AFRAID.
HE'S DEAD
NO. HE CAN'T BE DEAD. DO SOMETHING.
GO ON, DO SOMETHING.
I'M A DOCTOR. NOT JESUS CHRIST.
"AND HE'S VETO SKREEMER NOT LAZARUS."

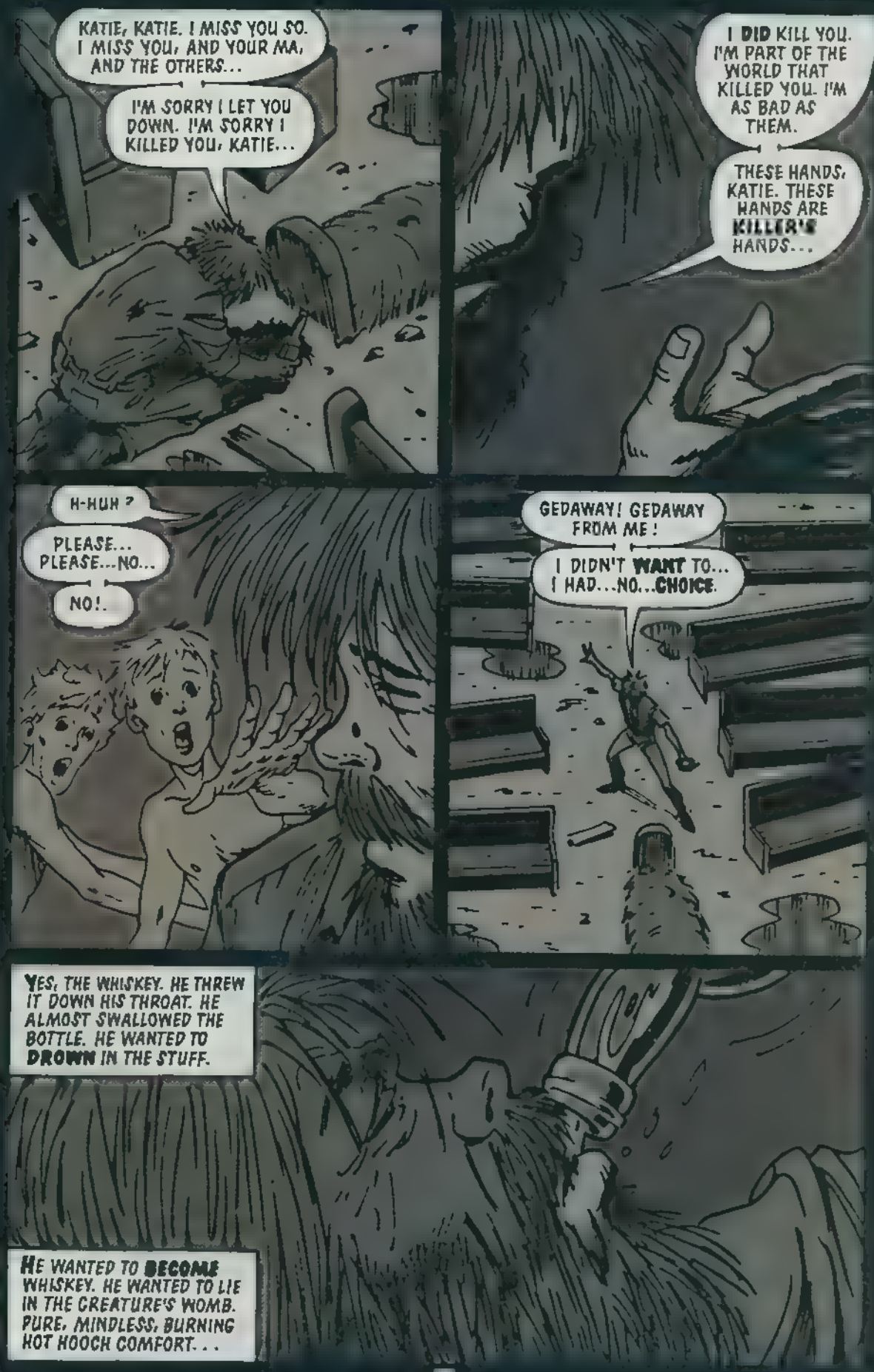
DEAD DEAD OH GOD VICKY VICKY HE'S GONE
HE'S GONE, VICKY HE'S GONE.
GMMMHPPPPGG
HE'S GONE!
CAREFUL! FOR GOD'S SAKE!
DESECRATING THE CORPSE OF A PRESIDENT WITH CHEAP LIQUOR...
GNURKKKKK

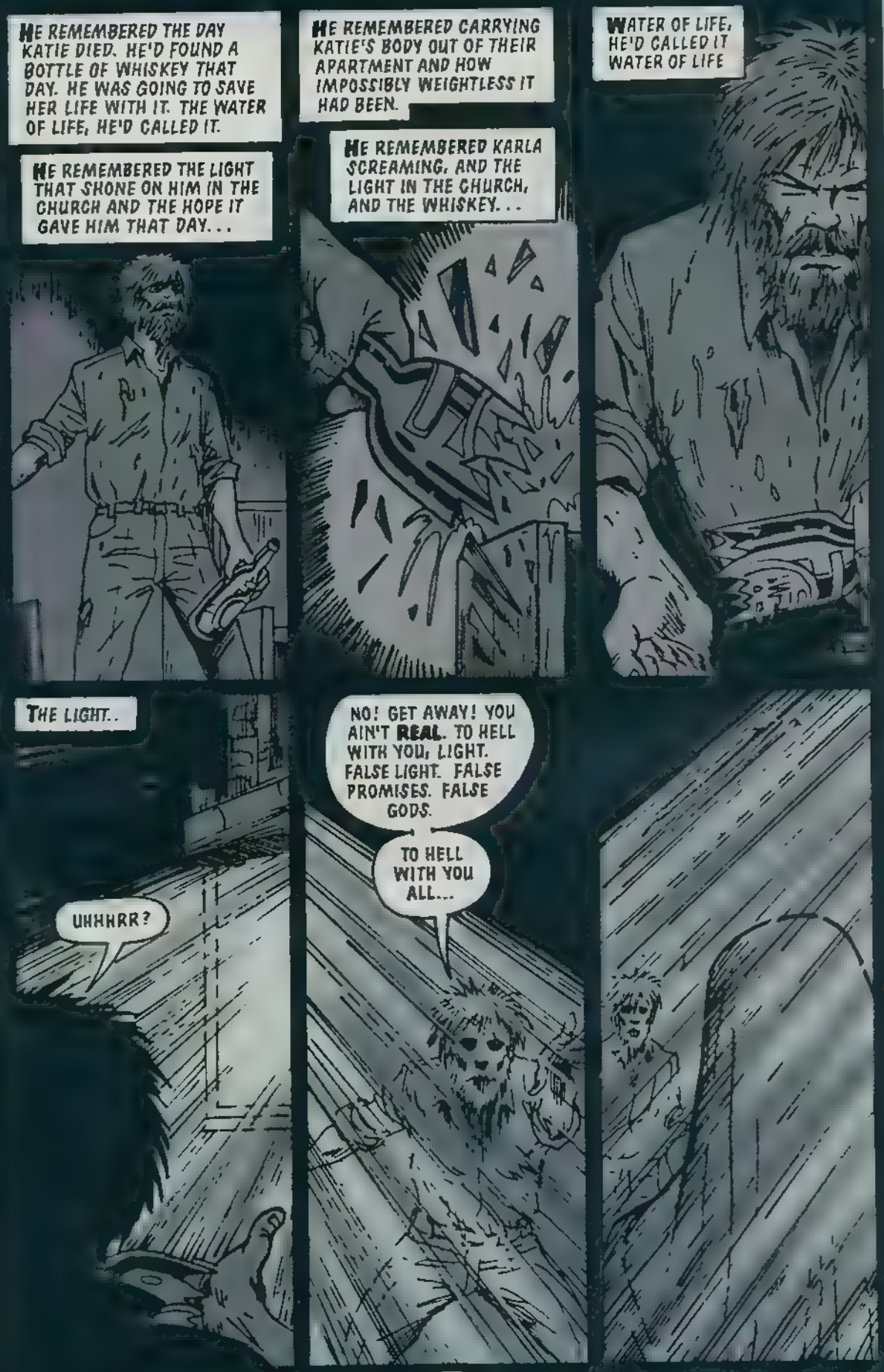

WHAT'S UP, VETO? OLD CHEST WOUNDS?
GO AWAY, MACADAM. YOUR STENCH IS STARTING TO ANNOY ME.
S-SURE, VETO. YOU AND YOUR LITTLE JOKES...
SHUT UP.
THE FIGHTING'S GETTING CLOSER. THE PALACE MAY FALL BEFORE THE EFFECTS OF OUR PROJECT ARE FELT.
TELL FINNEGAN I WANT THE WOMAN EVACUATED. HE MUST GO WITH HER. LOOK AFTER HER. IF THE CHILD DIES, HE DIES.
I'M GOING TO GET DUTCH.
DUTCH...
BEEN IN A COMA THREE WEEKS, VETO. REBECCA, THE BROAD THAT SHOT YOU, SHE WAS WORKING FOR VICKY. VICKY. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT.
REBECCA SPENT WEEKS GETTING INTO MY PANTS, JUST SO SHE COULD PLUG YOU.
WELL, WE SENT REBECCA BACK. MINUS A FEW BITS AND PIECES.
HEY, FOR A WHILE BACK THERE... WE THOUGHT YOU WAS DEAD. THE DOCTOR WHO WROTE YOU OFF DIED OF SHOCK WHEN YOU GRABBED HIS THROAT...
WE ALMOST DIED LAUGHING, OF COURSE.
DUTCH. .

DUTCH... IT'S ME, DUTCH. WE'RE GOING UPSTAIRS. WE'RE GOING TO THE EDGE OF THE WORLD.
AND THEN I'M GOING TO TELL YOU A STORY. A TRUE STORY.
HEY, TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF, TIM. ALL I KNOW IS YOU'RE A GUN FOR SKREEMER...
LATER, GLOREEN. YOU SHOULD REST.
GET OUTTA HERE. TALK TO ME. HOW ABOUT YOUR FOLKS. THEY STILL ALIVE?
HEY, FINNEGAN, WHATSA MATTER?
N-NOTHING IT'S JUST... THIS PLACE...
IT'S KINDA FAMILIAR

TWENTY SEVEN AFTER THE FALL MY GRANDMOTHER HADN'T SEEN MY GRANDFATHER FOR OVER TWO YEARS.
SHE HADN'T STOPPED LOOKING FOR HIM.
SHE HADN'T STOPPED TELLING TIM, MY FATHER, WHAT A GOOD MAN CHARLES FINNEGAN WAS
THIS THE ONLY PLACE THERE IS?
TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT, MISTER. I NEVER SAID IT WOULD BE ROMANTIC.
A STRONG MAN...
HEY...SOMETHING'S MOVING IN THE TRASH. THIS A SET UP?
UH UH MAYBE IT'S A RAT OR SOME-THING...
A PROUD MAN...
AH, IT'S ONLY MAD FINNY. HE'S HARMLESS GIVE HIM SOMETHING TO DRINK, WILL YA?
YES... PLEASE... WHISKEY... JUSTA DROP... OF WHISKEY
HERE YOU GO THEN, FINNY YOUR LUCKY DAY. I'M FEELING GENEROUS.
CATCH!
AND DRINK THIS WHILE YOU'RE DOWN THERE!


HAH HAH HAH HAH
CHARLES FINNEGAN HAD PASSED THIS PLACE MANY TIMES IN THE LAST TWO YEARS BUT HE HAD NEVER BEEN ABLE TO ENTER
BUT NOW HE HAD COMPANY. NOW HE WAS WITH WHISKEY.
THE STATE MY GRANDFATHER WAS IN, IT DIDN'T TAKE MUCH OIL TO GET THE WHEELS TURNING
IT WAS STILL THERE. WHAT HE HAD COME FOR. THE STONE. THE LITTLE STONE WAS STILL THERE.
THE LITTLE STONE THAT MARKED THE LITTLE GRAVE OF KATIE FINNEGAN


KATIE, KATIE. I MISS YOU SO. I MISS YOU, AND YOUR MA, AND THE OTHERS...
I'M SORRY I LET YOU DOWN. I'M SORRY I KILLED YOU, KATIE...
I DID KILL YOU. I'M PART OF THE WORLD THAT KILLED YOU. I'M AS BAD AS THEM.
THESE HANDS, KATIE. THESE HANDS ARE KILLER'S HANDS...
H-HUH ?
PLEASE... PLEASE...NO...
NO!.
GEDAWAY! GEDAWAY FROM ME!
I DIDN'T WANT TO... I HAD...NO...CHOICE.
YES, THE WHISKEY. HE THREW IT DOWN HIS THROAT. HE ALMOST SWALLOWED THE BOTTLE. HE WANTED TO DROWN IN THE STUFF.
HE WANTED TO BECOME WHISKEY. HE WANTED TO LIE IN THE CREATURE'S WOMB. PURE, MINDLESS, BURNING HOT HOOCH COMFORT...


HE REMEMBERED THE DAY KATIE DIED. HE'D FOUND A BOTTLE OF WHISKEY THAT DAY. HE WAS GOING TO SAVE HER LIFE WITH IT. THE WATER OF LIFE, HE'D CALLED IT.
HE REMEMBERED THE LIGHT THAT SHONE ON HIM IN THE CHURCH AND THE HOPE IT GAVE HIM THAT DAY...
HE REMEMBERED CARRYING KATIE'S BODY OUT OF THEIR APARTMENT AND HOW IMPOSSIBLY WEIGHTLESS IT HAD BEEN.
HE REMEMBERED KARLA SCREAMING, AND THE LIGHT IN THE CHURCH, AND THE WHISKEY...
WATER OF LIFE, HE'D CALLED IT WATER OF LIFE
THE LIGHT..
UHHHRR?
NO! GET AWAY! YOU AIN'T REAL. TO HELL WITH YOU, LIGHT. FALSE LIGHT. FALSE PROMISES. FALSE GODS.
TO HELL WITH YOU ALL...

FORGIVE ME. PLEASE FORGIVE ME. WASH MY HANDS.
LET ME KISS YOUR FACE AND FORGIVE ME...
PLEASE. I'M DESTROYED. I'M FINISHED. PLEASE FORGIVE ME. PLEASE WASH MY HANDS...
I FORGIVE YOU...
I FORGIVE YOU, WHATEVER IT IS YOU'VE DONE.
AND YOU CAN KISS ME IF YOU LIKE.

I'M SORRY... I'M SORRY, I HAD NO RIGHT. DON'T CRY...
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M BEING STUPID...
IT'S JUST, I CAN'T REMEMBER THE LAST TIME A MAN KISSED ME, AND THE WAY YOU LOOKED AT ME. I FELT BEAUTIFUL.
FOR A MOMENT I REALLY WAS BEAUTIFUL.
I'LL NEVER FORGET THE WAY YOU MADE ME FEEL. THANK YOU...
NO.
THANK YOU.

WHO IS IT ?
IT'S HAPPENING, DUTCH. RIGHT NOW. I KNOW IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK. BUT I'VE GOT TO DO IT ANYWAY.
I'VE GOT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT.
I STARTED THIS PLAN TEN YEARS AGO WITH MAGADAM. I ONLY UNDERSTOOD TODAY THAT HE WOULD BE THE ONE WHO'D BETRAY ME. TOO LATE NOW.
IT'S HAPPENING ALREADY. ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. ALL OVER AMERICA...

"...THE BALLOONS ARE GOING UP..."
Next: "D'ye Think I'm Dead?"